

## **Domestic Violence and Its Relationship to Marital Skills among Sample of Abused Women**

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### **Abstract**

*The present study aimed to detect the level of domestic violence in a sample of battered women, and reached the study sample (17) battered woman, and to achieve the objectives of the study was used as a measure of domestic violence (Mansoor,2014) it has also been developed Marital skills scale. The results showed that the level of domestic violence among the study sample was a high degree, as results showed a correlation statistically significant between domestic violence and marital skills of battered women, the study ended with a set of recommendations as a measure of empirical research in the field of domestic violence through the development of outreach programs able to improve these variables have battered wives, and the need to train the next two to marry and battered wives on Marital skills in order to improve their marital adjustment and lower cases of domestic violence*

**Keywords:** domestic violence, marital skills, battered women

### **The Theoretical Framework and the Previous Studies**

Family stability is considered as an important factor in the life of individuals, as it is the strong foundation on which society coherence is built ( Mosavia and Iravani, 2012). It is the foundation stone and the frame through which the social, psychological and emotional needs are satisfied in an atmosphere of acceptance, intimacy and mutual respect ( Kalkan and Ersanli, 2008). ( Kumar, 2015) suggested that family stability contributes effectively to achieving the personal correspondence for the individual in a manner that that fulfills happiness, optimism and satisfaction in his life as well as harmony between couples by which the personal and psychological criteria, such as love, trust and deeper understanding as well as mutual respect are deepened between couples ( Abbas, 2013).

Adjustment between the couples is considered as one of the important issues in achieving the familial integrity as well as developing an intimate relationship based on love, respect and care, since most couple get married so as to get intimacy, love and emotional support ( Hamden, 2006). The low levels of emotions and harmony between couples led to the emergence of psychological problems and increasing the couple disputes, consequently increasing the levels of divorce in the society as well as the cases of domestic violence ( Faye, et al, 2013).

Domestic violence is a dangerous phenomenon regardless the cultural backgrounds, the levels and conditions of living, since it creates a difficult situation for the victims and causes more psychological or physical suffering. When woman is abused, the issue becomes more complicated since that leads to more negative consequence that extend over generations (Takano, 2006).

(Al-Raihani, 2010) suggested that domestic violence threatens both the individual and the society as it disrupts the first cell in the society ( the family); therefore, the nature of relationships between its members are based on conflict and gaining power over others instead of being based on mutual respect and cooperation between its members. domestic violence threatens the safety of the family by the spread of violent practices between its individuals and using violence as a method for solving problems and settling disputes in perspectives. The continuous domestic violence undermines the family and devastates it (Al-Kharashi, 2012).

Domestic violence is a refused behavior in all the human societies due to its negative implications on both family and society, as it threatens the safety of the family and its individuals; since domestic violence represents a dangerous threat to the human rights.

The efforts of the international society continued to reduce this phenomenon, and that was evident in the international agreements to stop all the types of discrimination against women within the international declaration for the human rights as an affirmation to the human beings freedom and rights as well ensuring his safety and stability in an equivalent manner. In the first article, the declaration stated that all the human beings are born free with equal dignity and rights (Shaklabo, 2015).

Al-Ahmad, 2001 defines domestic violence as one of the aggressive behavior types which results from the existence of un-equivalent power relationships in the context of dividing the work tasks between man and woman inside the family and the consequences of that on determining the roles of each one of the family members.

Violence against woman, according to the definition of the international declaration for opposing all the forms of violence against woman, is every abuse against woman that is based on sex which causes serious physical, psychological and sexual harms, including threatening or the arbitrary deprivation from her rights in the general and public life (Al-Khouli, 2006).

Knickerhem and Teske define domestic violence as using power or threatening to use power by the husband in order to oblige the woman or intimidating her so as to be under his control; violence could be in the form of hitting, boxing or pushing. Matlin, 2000 suggested that domestic violence includes intended behaviors harms the woman, which could be physical, psychological and sexual. The concept of domestic violence indicates the attempt of one partner to control the other partner in a manner that is characterized by the violent control by using the physical abuse, threat, abuse, or contempt (Hamdan, 2011). Al-Oroud (2005) suggested that domestic violence is considered as any intended or unintended action that is committed in any manner against woman and causes physical or psychological suffering by threatening, exploitation, compulsion or contempt her physical and mental capabilities.

Theories explaining the phenomenon of domestic violence. There are many theories explaining the phenomenon of violence due to the diverse types of violence and the motives for that. These theories are:

### **1- The theory social learning**

This theory addressed the behavior of violence in research and study. Bandura is the founder of this theory, he illustrated violence as an acquired behavior, which is socially acquired by observation and imitation. There are three sources through which the individual learns violence, starting by the observation of the behavior, followed by the impact of family, peers, as well as the symbolic models, such as TV (Hamdan, 2011). The theory social learning stipulates that the violence behavior doesn't come only by imitation and observation, but also by the factors of enhancement. Learning violence as an aggressive behavior is a process that requires reward that plays an important role in choosing the violent response and enhancing it until it is a habit that the individual uses in case of depression (Shaklabo, 2015).

### **2- The cognitive theory**

The cognitive theory suggests that people don't get confused due to events but due to their perspectives, ideas and belief towards these events. In this context, the concept of violence for woman as well as her interpretation and cognition is the factor that affects her. The cognitive theory suggests that the nature by which woman is affected with the abuse either physically or psychologically depends on the way by which she recognizes, interprets, imagines and recalls this abuse. The woman may not be affected by the abuse itself, but by the way how she sees and interprets it. Therefore, the scope of study in terms of that should take into consideration the cognitive analysis of the abused woman and the way by which she realizes the reality of abusing, so that we would realize the nature of these ideas and the way by which affect the victim as well as the way through which the abused woman overcome these irrational beliefs (Hassan, 2003).

### **The impact of the phenomenon of domestic violence on the woman:**

The most important negative consequences of violence against woman is her continuous feeling of fear after being exposed to violence or during that. She may feel of guilt, even if she didn't commit any mistake, as she could feel responsible for this violence.

She could also feel of depression, as well as a decrease in self-esteem and anxiety. The frequent exposure make the woman more inclined to be controlled and bear abuse. Therefore, a decline in her ability to take care of her children, and that may increase the possibility of projecting that on her children by hitting them. the phenomenon of domestic violence also entails many physical implications, such as bruise and injuries , in some cases it causes abortion and may lead to death ( Shaklabo, 2015).The image of the wife who is exposed to domestic violence by her husband is represented by: accepting both traditional feminine and masculine roles and it is easy to control her, accepting the feeling of guilt, as well as low self-esteem ( Banat, 2004).

Domestic violence also entails imposing social isolation for the woman and preventing her from getting out of the house, at the time that her husband enjoys a social network, this isolation occurs either by the behaviors of the husband during the time of the presence of her friends or the family of his wife at home, which gradually leads them not to visit her or due to the husband's accusation to the wife's family or her friends that they are the reason of the problems that take place between them. In this case, the wife finds herself in a social isolation, where the outsiders find a difficulty in intervention and so the trend of social adjustment decreases, the husband may get more angry and could abuse his wife physically ( Al-Rayhani, 2010). Many studies suggested that domestic violence and couple conflicts cause negative implications on the couple's life, as ( Huston et al , 2001) suggests that the confused relationship between couples is a major indicator that they would probably be affected by depression, anxiety as well as psychological stressors and diseases. Mousa (1997) suggests that the stable relationship, in the long run, provides the couples with the capability of facing the negative consequences of life stressors, while the instable relationship makes them more vulnerable to the negative consequences of life stressors.

Many factors affect the marital life, as the study of ( Sisi and Pasinlioglu, 2013) suggested that the level of correspondence between the couples is affected by the physical or psychological health for the couples.( Zerach et al , 2015) suggested that the painful experiences and the traumatic events in the marital life affect both couples.

#### **-The forms of domestic violence**

**Physical violence:** it is any behavior that causes an apparent harm that can be seen by the observer, it includes pushing, hitting, kicking or boxing as well as using sharp tools which represents the most common type of violence that could leave observable harm on the abused person ( Hage, 2000). The statistics show that about 21% of the women received a medical care in the emergency divisions at hospitals after they had quarreled with their husbands and had been exposed to physical violence ( Cohen et al, 2003).

**Psychological violence:** it refers to all the behaviors that bring harm to the feeling of the woman and makes her feel of inferiority, such as sarcasm, marginalization, and non appreciation, either she was alone or with others. This psychological violence entails negative Psychological consequences for the woman and lets her feel of inferiority ( Al-Faris, 2015). **Verbal violence:** it refers to reviling the woman and desiring her with bad words. This is the most common violence in the Arab societies ( Al-awawdeh, 2002).

**Sexual violence:** refers to the husband's attempt to use violence and threat to make sex with his wife without considering her healthy, and psychological situation or her sexual desires. It is considered as one of the disturbing violence manifestations , and it is usually kept secretly due to the victim's shame and her feeling of fear from the offender revenge from the one hand and due to her belief that the society will blame her . Sexual violence also includes the sexual comments about the woman and her body ( Al-awwad, 2002). **The health violence:** it refers to depriving the wife from the healthy conditions that are suitable for her and not considering her reproductive health; which means her ability to get pregnant without being exposed to the dangers of close periods between pregnancies by getting the medical supervision and taking the necessary vaccines as well as the good dietary for the pregnant wife in addition to allowing suitable periods between the pregnancies ( Al-Awawdeh, 1998)

#### **The factors leading to domestic violence:**

**The social factors:** the social conditions in which the individual lives are as important as the other conditions in which he lives. These conditions play an important role in the occurrence of the domestic violence, such as the socialization which is based on the violent way of socialization, which give s the individual a weak personality,

and so he will deal with his future issues in a violent way too. The family system which also gives the man the absolute power in the family enhances the use of violence as a method for controlling the woman (Raihani, 2010). The psychological factors these are represented by the couple failure in the good communication with each other as well as the inability to negotiate in a rational manner way ; therefore , there will be the feeling of refusal and rejection between the partners . Also the feelings of inferiority and lack of self confidence . leads the man to use the violent behavior against his wife so as to compensate his feeling of inferiority and to rescue himself from the feelings of failure and depression ( Abdulrahman , 2014 ) . The cultural factors: culture plays an important role in preparing the individual with different patterns of behaviors, including violence. Which could be acquired from the culture of the society? The cultural factors are represented by the clear variation in the educational level for the man and the woman , and this creates stress and imbalance, where the man tries to compensate for his lack of confidence by insulting the woman and disrespecting her . the cultural values also encourage violence in order to achieve the male dominance ( Azzam, 2000)

### **The economical factors: the economical**

Status is one of the aspects that leads to domestic violence. The lack of economical resources limits the family ability to perform its tasks and duties . the economical resources could be available, but the couples disagree about the method of spending and managing the family budget and this leads to conflicts ( schramm et al , 2012 ) The low income , the low job status, miserliness, and profusion as well as keeping one's income and the unwillingness to spend with regard to the family affairs , will ultimately lead to a state of disorder in the couple's relationship ( Mahmoud , 2006 ) conger et al (2002) suggested that the individual's low income relates to the economic changes and the financial loss which he/she experiences on the relationships within the family system The results of Kinnunen and Feldt (2004) showed that the difficult economical circumstances affect negatively on the marital life . the study results also showed that unemployment among men related directly with the reports associated with marital adjustment among women . the longer the period of unemployment for men , the least the marital adjustment would be among women. The results also showed that the difficult economical circumstances increase the psychological suffering, and thus affect negatively on the levels of marital adjustment . Holtzworth et al, 1997 found that there is a negative relationship between the high economical status and violence against woman.

### **The marital skills**

They are a number of skills that the couples are supposed to have, which are represented by the verbal expressions, the bodily gestures, as well as the facial expressions that are used in the different life situations ( Bandora, 1997). The skills are as acquired behaviors that include the emotional behavior as well as the sensory and motor activity( Al-Dagsheem, 2000). Communication skills are the most important marital skills; it refers to the degree by which the couples have the methods of conversation either verbal or nonverbal. Communication is considered as the foundation stone in the family stability and the marital adjustment, in which both partners express their feeling and ideas to each other and tell their needs and desires without hesitation. Therefore, love will maintain and renewed between them, their perspectives get closer and their conflicts disappear. Frankness also plays an important role in promoting Communication in the marital relationship, where the task of effective Communication relates to recognizing the other partner and accepting his feelings and ideas honestly ( Lee and Ok, 2002).

The concept of Communication indicates the process through which information is communicated, ideas and opinions are exchanged by speaking, writing or signs between two partners or a group of people. Communication consists of two types: verbal Communication, which refers to using the spoken linguistic symbols that communicate feelings, ideas and attitudes, provided that both the speaker and the listener use a simple, and understandable language, the nonverbal Communication which includes all the movements, gestures and bodily expressions that the individual does in order to send a certain message to another individual.

The marital communication expresses the process through which the couples can express their feeling as well as desires and understand the ideas and trends. The methods of marital communication are divided into two parts: the mental communication, which refers to communication between the couples in order to express their life as well as work difficulties, ambitions, and future goals. The other methods the emotional communication, which

refers to talking about love and fascination as well as disclosing the feelings of intimacy and admiration to each other ( Abu Ghazala, 2008).

According to Adler 2005 the happy marital life is based on mutual understanding and harmony between husbands regarding their attitudes, thoughts and conditions, this can be achieved through constant communication between them. This effective communication should be based on acceptance and respect in a way that leads to making decisions which contribute to achieving family stability and marital adjustment. Most studies have confirmed the importance of effective communication in achieving family stability . the result of the study carried by (scott, 2002) with a sample of 92 couples showed that the communication between couples is considered effective when the two couples share common feelings , where the feeling of each partner relates to the quality of marital communication that achieves harmony . the study carried by ( Alayi, Ahmadi ,Khamen ,2011) suggests that adjustment between couples relates directly with effective communication within the various aspects of marital relationships.

Hashemi ,2015 suggested that the effective communication between couples contributed to creating harmony between them , where its effects emerge on the marital and family life since it increases the intimacy and satisfaction between couples . the dominant communication styles in the family have inevitable effects on the personality of the children since the absence of effective communication leads to lack of understating and creates an atmosphere of conflict between couples. Blais and Boisvert, 2007 showed that the most related traits with the variables of marital adjustment and family stability are the effective situation towards the problems as well as the infrequent use for the strategies of adverse adaptation in addition to the positive recognition of the skills of marital communication. Yuksel an Dag ,2015 showed that the couples` s use of the strategies of confrontation and sharing the family rules as well as their ability to communicate effectively are considered contributing factors in achieving the marital adjustment and the success of the marital relationship. The effective marriage is based on certain factors including understating and harmony between couple in thought and attitudes . this comes by the constant communication between couples where this kind of communication is based on mutual respect between couples ( Abu Al- Ezz,2007) .

(Damial Be Wishman and Uebellack ,2013) shows that the most influential factors in achieving the marital adjustment is satisfaction regarding the style of communication between couples. Abo Ghalee ,2013 suggested that the marital life experiences many changes and challenges , at times this marital is stable and calm, at other times it is violent and this attributed to the styles of communication between couple .Hence , marriage is considered as a difficult task which requires both couples to face their difficulties and problems and find the appropriate solutions for them in order to get to the state of marital adjustment. Sofntoire , 2001 suggested that there is a correlation relationship between the marital conflicts and the lack of effective communication methods between couple, where the lack of communication skills leads to lack of understanding and intimacy in the marital relation , and this in turn leads to marital conflict. The effective communication is the basic generator for the management of the marital relationship in which any setback in this process leads to conflict and this relates to negative consequences on the marital life so it is full of problems and violence (Covey,1997).

In order to construct the family stability in an effective manner ,we should address the factors on which the couples are based within their marital relationship , where the presence of these factors and basics in the marital life leads to the marital adjustment as well as picking the fruits of marital happiness , in addition to the decrease in the cases of family violence, the first factors of those is active listening, which refers to giving a full attention to the speaker as well as paying attention to the verbal and nonverbal communication. Communication contributes to building positive relationships with the other partner ( Greenberg, 2010). The second factor is the expression of feeling; which refers to expressing feeling in a reliable and acceptable way, where the individual has the right to express his positive and negative feelings, as the disclosing these feelings contributes to achieving harmony between what the individual says and feels( AbdulQader, 1996).

It also refers to the emotional feelings and senses that reflects the individual's psychological state, and that are expressed by verbal and facial expression ( Al-Adeli, 2010). The third factor is Empathy, which refers to the level of marital sharing of the emotional feelings and the ability to avoid the situation that lead to conflicts and suffering ( BaniYounous, 2009). Empathy is considered as the most effective response regarding the feelings of

other partner and it contributes to organizing the feelings and reflecting emotions. The empathy is represented by the individual's sensitivity towards the feelings of others and his interest about them ( Tamaren, 2010).

Empathy between couples implies the ability of each of them to imagine himself in the place of the other partner, share him/her with happiness and grief and understand the ideas, emotions, and perspectives of that other partner. Empathy between the couples enhances the relationship, promotes the positive interaction, converges the viewpoints and increases the intimacy ( Mihailoval and Tretjakova 2014). Scott ( 2002), in his study which consisted of 192 individuals , and aimed at identifying the characteristics of successful marital relationship revealed that communication between couples is effective when each of them expresses his/ her feelings and emotions in a balanced manner, where the feelings of understanding the other partner relate to the type of communication that achieves the marital adjustment. Batool and Khalid (2012)suggested that the ability of Empathy has a basic role in the success of the marital relationship, as it makes the relationship solid and increases the positive communication between the couples and maintain the marital life. Duman and Erkan, 2014 suggested that marital relationship requires that both couples understand, listen, care about the needs and desires of each other. The successful marriage is based on the confidence between each other as well as exchanging the ideas, making decisions, and their commitment towards the marital relationship ( Mosavia and Irvanib, 2012). Thus, Johnson ( 2004) suggests that the marital relationship is one of the most important social and humanistic relationships that affect both directly and indirectly on the individual's view towards himself and towards the others as well as the degree at which he has the psychological health; the healthy marital relationship paves the way for a safe and secure environment, it also enhances the feeling of security, intimacy, as well as psychological comfort between couples.

Carlson, 1997 suggested that enhancing the skills of communication as well as the ability to solve problems and make decisions among the abused women are important objectives for the interventions with them. Several studies showed that the children and adolescents who live in families dominated by violence are more likely to use violence against their wives in the future in comparison with those who didn't live in such circumstances; the child learns from his father when he sees that his father uses violence against this mother ( Brown and Herbert, 1997).

Holtzworth, et al, (1997) suggested that the abused women lack the skills of communication as opposed to the un abused women. The results showed that the abused women who have the skills of communication and problem solving can deal more effectively with the negative consequences resulting from being exposed to violence.

Epstein et al 1997 suggested that the difficulties between the couples tend to have two forms. The first of these difficulties relate to the problems in expression and effective listening relating to the ideas and feelings between the couples. The second relates to taking decisions. Therefore, one of the styles of training couples regarding the effective communication skills includes teaching them how to involve in expressing their ideas and emotions.

Violence is evident among the couples who don't communicate in an effective manner; such couples are unable to manage conflicts or solve the marital problems. They don't listen to each other and aren't likely to suggest solutions for the problems that face them. The husband may tend to withdraw from the situation and maintains the problem without solution , or he would manage the marital conflicts by using violence ( Halford et al, 1997).

The researcher reviewed the studied relating to the subject, which address the variables of the current study. These were addressed according to the year of publishing , starting by the most recent ones.

Mansour ( 2014) conducted a study which aimed at identifying the level of family violence in Amman: a field study of the abused women from an educational perspective. The study sample consisted of 250 abused women. In order to achieve the study objective, a scale was developed for family violence. The results showed that the Jordanian women are exposed to moral, social, financial as well as physical violence with a high degree .

The results showed that there are statistically significant differences between the moral violence used against the wife and her level of education; indicating that the uneducated women are more exposed to violence as opposed to educated ones. Banat ( 2004) conducted a study which aimed at measuring the impact of training regarding the level of the skills of communication and problem solving on improving self-esteem, adaptation as well as domestic violence. The results showed that there is an evident effectiveness for the training on the skills of communication and problem solving, in favor of the experimental group, in terms of improving self-esteem,

adaptation as well as reducing domestic violence. Al-Awawdeh, 2002 conducted a study about violence against wife in the Jordanian society, which aimed at identifying the extent of violence against wife in the Jordanian society.

The study sample consisted of 1300 women. The results showed that wives in the Jordanian society suffer from the forms of sexual, social, verbal as well as physical violence. The results showed that this phenomenon increases as we go down the social ladder, where there is more poverty and illiteracy.

Cloutler et al , (2002) conducted a study about the pregnant women who were exposed to violence by their husbands in order to measure the frequency of the occurrence of the violent behaviors during the pregnancy period and identify how these wives describe the quality of the relationship. The study sample consisted of 81 women of those who were physically abused by their husbands during the pregnancy period. The scale of domestic violence was used. The results showed that the most common forms of domestic violence during the pregnancy period was the verbal violence followed by the physical violence.

Exposito et al ( 2009) conducted a study entitled by "the societal recognition of violence against women: the individual traits for the abusers and the victims of violence." The study aimed at citing a conceptualization for the men who use violence against women. A scale was designed regarding violence. The study sample consisted of ( 286) abuser men and abused women. The results showed that there is a clear difference between them regarding the conceptualization and reasons of violence. The results showed that the features of violence match with the traditional roles for both men and women.

#### **The studies that addressed the marital skills, arranged by year , starting from the most recent:**

Camisasca, Miragoli and Blasio ( 2014) conducted a study which aimed at investigating the mediator effects relating to the marital relationship among couples in Italy. The study sample consisted of 236 husbands and wives of those who have children , aged between ( 9-11) years old. The results showed that the model of parental participation mediates the relationship between marital adjustment and anxiety as well as parental stress. The results also showed that the marital relationships that were characterized by warmth, emotional support and more marital skills relating to managing the conflicts and effective communication were also associated with lower levels of stress among parents and with achieving a high level of marital adjustment.

Muraru and Turliuc, (2013) conducted a study which aimed at investigating whether there are differences between men and women regarding the emotional relationships, the methods of marital communications and adjustment in the marital life. The study sample consisted of 294 individuals . the researchers used the scales relating to the self-report, the scale of differentiation in the family system, the scale of evaluating cohesion and the ability of family adaptation , the scale of experience in the intimate relationships, as well as the scale of mutual adjustment. The results showed that the romantic communication is the best predictor for the marital adjustment. In the case of women, the family of origin predicted their level of romantic communication. As for the groups related to gender, the results showed that marital adjustment among the sample individuals was of a medium degree. The results also showed that both men and women were similar when things were related to the emotional relationships, styles of romantic communication as well as marital adjustment.

Faye, Kalrs, Subramanyam, Shah, Kamath, and Pakhare, (2013) conducted a study which aimed at identifying the possible reasons for divorce and domestic violence as well as identifying the ways by which people deal with that and the possible correlation between that and the psychological disorders. The study sample consisted of 100 individual of those who experienced divorce and violence. The scale of mutual adjustment, the scale of adaptation mechanisms, as well as the checklist for symptoms were used. The results showed that marital adjustment was low in 91.6% of the total cases, with lower levels of mutual cohesion and emotional expressions. The results showed that ( 64%) of the sample individuals suffered from behavioral disorders, where depression was in the first place. The low levels of marital communication were also of the most important psychological problems.

Blais and Boisvert, 2007 conducted a study that aimed at identifying the relationship the level of marital adjustment and the personal traits that both couples. The study sample consisted of 70 Canadian couples. The researchers used the scales of marital adjustment, psychological adjustment, as well as the self-report questionnaire which evaluates the variables of ( the strategies of adaptation and solving problems, the skills of perceived communication). The results showed that the most related traits with the variables of marital adjustment

were the effective attitudes towards problems, as well as the infrequent use of the adverse adaptation, in addition to the positive recognition for the communication skills among husbands.

Abu Al-Ezz, 2007, conducted a study that aimed at identifying the relationship of adjustment within the marital life and the psychological health among women in Jordan with the methods of marital transactions as well as the styles of marital communication. The study sample consisted of 136 married women. The researchers used the scales of marital adjustment, marital communication as well as psychological health. The results showed that the wives whose husbands deal with them in intimacy and acceptance have more levels of marital adjustment and psychological health as opposed to those the wives who receive tough treatment by their husbands. The results showed that the wives who use effective communication styles have a higher level of marital adjustment in comparison with the wives who use ineffective communication styles.

Al-Ibrahim, (2007) conducted a study that aimed at identifying the relationship between the marital skills (communication, emotional expression, and problem solving) and adjustment among the married women who work in the educational sector in the governorate of Irbid. The study sample consisted of 510 married women. In order to achieve the study objectives, the researcher used the scales of marital adjustment, and marital skills. The results showed that there is a positive relationship between marital adjustment and marital skills.

Al-Shurman. 2007 conducted a study that aimed at identifying the communication between the couples and its relationship with the marital adjustment from the perspective of the male and female employees at Al-Yarmouk University. The study sample consisted of 364 couples. In order to achieve the study objectives, the researcher constructed the scales of marital adjustment, and marital communication. The results showed that there is a statistically significant relationship between the effective communication and marital adjustment.

### **The study problem**

Violence against women is considered as one of the most important issues that affects the structure and cohesion of the family as well as the safety of its members. Violence against women is one of the subjects that didn't receive enough attention since the disclosure of it is considered as a violation of the family privacy, and so the abused woman is forced to keep silent despite the violence that she is exposed to (Mustafa, 2006). The attention given to the study of domestic violence is worldwide recently, due to the changes that began to take place in the contemporary societies, and we observe the negative effects of these changes on the marital life in a clear manner, where the economic, social and economic changes play an important role in the emergence of the marital conflicts and increase the severity of the family disturbances which, in turn, affect negatively on the couples and threaten their marital and familial life as well as the society as a whole.

Even though there are many studies regarding domestic violence in Jordan, these studies addressed the general phenomenon, the percentages of prevalence as well as its reasons. This study, in particular highlights a number of the factors affecting the quality of marital relationship. This study also aimed at identifying the relationship between domestic violence and marital skills based on the records available at the department of family adjustment which belongs to the ministry of social development, where 864 abused cases were received accompanied by 165 children; the percentage of the abused Jordanian women was about (82.2%).

The marital relationship is considered as that kind of relationship where the observable and underlying factors have a major role, and that makes it more exposed to crisis and conflicts, which require the presence of several social and psychological skills in order to overcome these issues. Despite the importance of the marital relationship for the society as a whole, as a type of social organization for the humanistic relationships, the scientific and systematic understanding for the marital relationship will not be clear unless we look at this issue in a broad vision that gathers the legal, social, and psychological aspects.

The family, as the nucleus of the society, experience the same changes that are experienced by the whole society. These changes aren't exclusive for the marital relationships, but they extend to include the core of this relationship through changing the social roles, and thus changing the expectations related to gender among couples. The social complicated conditions in which the families live as well as the bad financial circumstances make it necessary for the family members to agree upon certain principles in order to avoid the marital conflicts in the light of these life stressors. In this context, the changes affect the marital skills, such as the skill of communication between



couples, the skill of emotional expression,; therefore the problem of this study lies in the answers of the following questions:

1-what is the level of domestic violence among the abused women?

2-Is there a statistically significant relationship at the level of ( $\alpha > 0.05$ ) between domestic violence and the marital skills of the abused women?

### **The study importance**

The current study derives its importance from being a vital issue and a main factor in the stability of the family as well as protecting it from marital conflicts. This study is also important because domestic violence represents a basic dimension from the dimensions of adjustment in the life of the individual as well as a vital elements between the couples. The current study also provides a new cognitive side that gives a broad conceptualization and explanation for the increase of the cases of domestic violence. As for the practical level, the results of this study may provide the data upon which those who are in charge of marital and familial counseling can depend in order to understand the nature of the marital relationship as well as the factors affecting it; therefore help them in improving the marital relationship. The study also provides the information that could help the professionals in developing effective counseling programs that contribute to improving the marital relationships and reducing the cases of domestic violence.

### **The theoretical and procedural definitions**

Domestic violence: it is defined as a certain type of illegal use of power and as that type of behavior which implies causing harm to others; it is accompanied with emotions, such as stress, anger (Shaklaba, 2015). It is procedurally defined, particularly for this study, as the points that the wife scores on the scale items. The marital skills: they are a set of skills that the wife is supposed to have, these skills are represented by the verbal expressions, the physical gestures as well as emotional expression, empathy, and communication skills which are used in the different life situations (Bandora, 1997).

It is procedurally defined, particularly for this study, as the points that the wife scores on the scale that is designed for this purpose. Abused women: the married women who disclosed information about being exposed to verbal or physical violence during the month of September according to the records of the department of family adjustment. The study limits: this study was only exclusive for the abused women in the department of family adjustment. The results of this study are limited to the year (2016/2017). The results of this study are also limited by the study tools used; the scale of marital skills and the scale of familial violence.

### **Method and procedures**

The researcher addressed the methodology and the design followed in the study, in terms of the study sample, the study population, and the study tools used in the study.

#### **First: the study population:**

The study population consisted of 33 abused women from those presented in the records of the department of family adjustment during the year (2016/2017). The study sample consisted of 17 abused women, in order to identify the level of familial violence and its relationship with the marital skills.

#### **Second: the study tools:**

In order to achieve the objectives of the current study, the researcher used the following tools:

##### **First: the scale of familial violence:**

The scale of familial violence, which was developed by Mansour (2014), was used in this study. This scale is characterized by appropriate psychometric traits as well high reliability and validity, where the internal consistent was (0.91). The scale consisted of 55 items, and the respondents are asked to rate their responses on a 5-point scale according to likert scale( 1= totally disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neutral, 4= agree, 5= totally agree). The total score of the scale ranges between (55-275).

##### **The reliability and validity of the scale were verified as follows:**

1- the validity of the arbitrators:

Mansour (2014) introduced the scale which consisted of 35 items to 16 arbitrators from the faculty members specialized in counseling, psychology as well as measurement and evaluation in the Jordanian universities, in order to verify its validity of its items. The percentage of correspondence was about 80%, and so the items weren't modified, and no items were omitted.

Mansour (2014) verified the reliability of the scale by using :

2- the internal consistency( Cronbach alpha): the reliability for the scale of familial violence using the internal consistency based on Cronbach alpha formula, where the values of Cronbach alpha ranged between ( 0.72- 0.90).

### **The scale of marital skills:**

#### **The content validity:**

This scale was introduced in its initial version with 30 items to 10 arbitrators from the faculty members specialized in psychological and educational counseling, psychology as well as measurement and evaluation in the Jordanian universities in order to verify that its items are well understood, to ensure that each item belongs to the dimension that it measures, and to assert the right linguistic citation of the items. Choosing the items of the scale was based on agreement of 80% , thus some items were modified and 5 items were omitted.

#### **The validity of the internal construction:**

The validity of the internal construction was verified by calculating the correlation coefficients of the total degree for each dimension of the marital skills scale with the total degree of the marital skills based on the data taken from the exploratory sample which consisted of 12 abused women. Table 1 illustrates the results:

**Table 1: The values of Pearson's correlation coefficients for the dimensions correlation with the total degree of the marital skills scale**

Dimension	correlation coefficient
Expressing emotions	0.72
Effective communication	0.85
Managing emotions	0.66
Empathy	0.73

Statistically significant at 0.01

Table 1 shows that the values of correlation coefficients of the dimensions of the marital skills with the total degree of the scale ranged between ( 0.66-0.85) and they are Statistically significant at 0.01. The correlation coefficient was also calculated for each item with the total degree of the dimension to which the item belongs. Table 2 shows the values of Pearson's correlation coefficients between the degrees of the items and the total degree to which it belongs.

**Table 2: the values of Pearson's correlation coefficients for the items' correlation with the dimensions to which they belong for the marital skills scale**

Item number	correlation coefficient	Item number	correlation coefficient	Item number	correlation coefficient
1	0.64	11	0.60	21	0.88
2	0.72	12	0.66	22	0.85
3	0.62	13	0.70	23	0.91
4	0.80	14	0.72	24	0.65
5	0.58	15	0.75	25	0.80
6	0.75	16	0.43		
7	0.54	17	0.73		
8	0.71	18	0.72		
9	0.48	19	0.81		
10	0.58	20	0.67		

Statistically significant at 0.01

Statistically significant at 0.05

Table 1 shows that the correlation coefficients of the items with the dimensions to which they belong are Statistically significant where the correlation coefficients ranged between ( 0.43 -0.91), which indicates that the scale measures the marital, therefore the scale in its final version consists of 25 items.

#### The scale reliability:

The reliability degree of the scale was calculated by using the internal consistency (Cronbach alpha) and by repeating the test. The scale was applied to an exploratory sample which consisted of 15 women with a time interval of 14 days. Cronbach alpha coefficient as well as Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated between the two applications for each dimension and for the scale as a whole. Table 3 illustrates the results of reliability according to the dimensions of the scale.

**Table 3: The value of reliability coefficient by using retest as well as internal consistency( Cronbach alpha) for the scale of marital skills as a whole and for each dimension**

Dimension	The value of reliability coefficient / retest	The value of reliability coefficient ( Cronbach alpha)
Expressing emotions	0.84	0.80
Effective communication	0.91	0.81
Managing emotions	0.79	0.75
Empathy	0.71	0.87
The total scale	0.91	0.89

Statistically significant at 0.01

Table 3 illustrates that the scale has acceptable reliability degrees for the purposes of the study, where the value of reliability coefficient for the total scale was ( 0.91) using retest, and (0.89) using ( Cronbach alpha), while the values of reliability coefficient for the scale dimensions ranged between ( 0.71 – 0.91 ) using retest and the values of internal consistency for these dimensions ranged between ( 0.75- 0.87).

Correcting the scale: the scoring of likert 5-point scale was used as follows: ( always= 5 degrees; often= 4 degrees; sometimes=3 degrees; rarely=2 degrees; never=1 degree) for the positive items in the scale of marital skills. The scoring of likert 5-point scale for the negative items was used as follows:

Description	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Score	1	2	3	4	5

The following criterion was used for the degree of the items: the highest value- the lowest value for the response alternatives divided by the number of levels  $(5-1)/3= 1.33$ . this level equals the length of the category. Thus, the values of the means for this study are as follows:

- a- if the mean for the item is  $\leq 2.33$ , then the item score is low
- b- if the mean for the item ranges between  $(2.34 - 3.67)$ , then the item score is medium.
- c- if the mean for the item ranges between  $(3.68 - 5)$ , then the item score is high.

The range of the scores is between  $(25 -125)$ . The low scores indicate low level of marital skills, while the high scores indicate high level of marital skills.

The statistical processing of the data:

In order to answer the study questions, the means and standard deviations were calculated . Pearson correlation coefficient was used.

Displaying and discussing the results:

The results and discussion relating to the first question: what is the level of domestic violence among the study sample individuals? The means and standard deviations were calculated in order to answer the question.

**Table 4: the means and standard deviations for the scale of marital skills**

Sample	Mean	standard deviation	rate
17	3.25	1.69	high

Table 4 shows that domestic violence among the abused women was high, with a mean of  $(3.25)$ . The results showed that domestic violence among the abused women was high. This is attributed to the increased family burdens as well as the economic stressors that affect the marital adjustment; this was asserted by the results of Kinnunen and Feldt (2004), where the economic stressors affect negatively on the marital adjustment, increases the marital conflicts .In order to answer the second question: Is there a statistically significant relationship at the level of  $(\alpha>0.05)$  between domestic violence and the marital skills of the abused women? Pearson correlation coefficient was used, between the total score for domestic violence scale and the total score for marital skills scale as well as their dimensions. Table 3 shows these results.

**Table 5 The results of Pearson correlation coefficient for the relationship between domestic violence and marital skills scale as well as their dimensions**

marital skills dimensions	domestic violence
Expressing emotions	0.46-
Effective communication	0.47-
Managing emotions	0.25-
Empathy	0.27-
The total scale	0.48-

Statistically significant at 0.05

Table 5 shows that the value of correlation coefficient between domestic violence and marital skills among the married teaches was  $(0.48-)$  which is Statistically significant at 0.05; this represents a negative relationship , where as domestic violence increases, the level of marital skills decrease among the abused women and vice versa since the women who are exposed to violence don't have the sufficient marital skills that help them to accept their husbands and solve the family problems. If the women have the basic skills( communication skill, Expressing emotions skill , and Managing emotions skill), they will have more ability to reduce domestic violence and consequently achieve the marital adjustment.

This finding corresponds with the results of other studies. While the findings of the question were conflicting with other studies, such as ( Al\_Maghribi, 2004), which showed that there are statistically significant differences between wives and husbands in marital adjustment, where wives were more adjusted as opposed to their husbands. This is attributed to the difference of sample and environment.

### **Recommendations**

1. The necessity to train prospective spouses and abused wives regarding the marital skills in order to improve their marital adjustment and reduce the incidence of domestic violence.
2. necessity of activating the counseling family sector and activating its activities in reality.
3. conducting studies about domestic violence and its relationship with such variables as personality patterns and psychological compatibility.
4. conducting experimental research in the field of domestic violence through the development of counseling programs in order to improve these variables among abused wives.

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